Community Sehos Please return this slip to a messenger PROMPTLY. SENATE HEARING SLIP (City and Zip Code) (Street Address or Route Mumber) only; Neither for nor against: (Please Print Plainly) DATE: 5-30 00 Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South Speaking for information but not speaking: but not speaking: Registering in Favor: Registering Against: Speaking in Favor: Speaking Against: Haran 1200 P.O.Box 7882 (Representing) SUBJECT *A* - HB 850 E BILL NO.-NAME) Please return this slip to a messenger PROMPTLY. SENATE HEARING SLIP Lutheran Special School SUBJECT School Chaice (Street Address or Route Number) 9700 W. Grantusa Dr only; Neither for nor against: (Please Print Plainly) Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South Speaking for information Hilwaykee (1) but not speaking: but not speaking: 5 30 00 Registering in Favor: Registering Against: Speaking in Favor: (City and Zip Code) Speaking Against: P.O.Box 7882 (Representing) (NAME) BILL NO. DATE:___ Please return this slip to a messenger PROMPTLY. 533/6 Self + + chilones SENATE HEARING SLIP SUBJECT LAD REPORT Speaking in Fayor: Choice Proper (Street Address or Route Number) 76 7 only; Neither for nor against: (Please Print Plainly) Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South miles Wi Speaking for information but not speaking: but not speaking: Registering in Favor: Registering Against: (City and Zip Code) Speaking Against: 1A Ex1e 3000 (Representing) BILL NO.

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State Capitol - B35 South
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State Capitol - B35 South
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Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South

P.O.Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

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P.O.Box 7882
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SENATE HEARING SLIP

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol – B35 South

P.O.Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707–7882

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South

Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Madison, WI 53707-7882

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DATE: 5/30/00 SUBJECT MPCP BILL NO.-

Wanda J. Montgomery

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms State Capitol - B35 South Madison, WI 53707-7882 P.O.Box 7882

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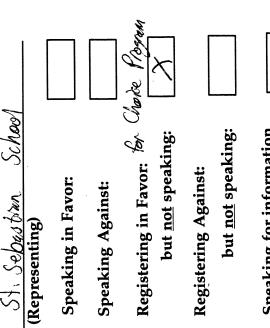
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P.O.Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
State Capitol - B35 South
P.O.Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Representative Mark D. Gundrum

State Capitol, P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708 (608) 267-5158

(414) 425-2596

TO:

All Legislators

FROM:

State Representative Mark D. Gundrum

DATE:

March 2, 2000

RE:

Co-Sponsorship of LRB 4645: Relating to Eligibility of private schools to participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program.



Please note the deadline to sign on is 4 p.m., TOMORROW, Friday, March 3.



Just this past Monday, it was reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* that a private Milwaukee area high school, Thomas More, is being prohibited by the Department of Public Instruction from participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. Part of the alleged basis for the exclusion is that only 20-percent of the school's property is located in the City of Milwaukee, while the other 80-percent of the school's property is located in the City of St. Francis.

This bill would clarify and relax the strict interpretation of the Department by stating that any private school may participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program so long as the school is located in the City of Milwaukee *or* situated on property any portion of which is located in the City of Milwaukee. The bill is specifically intended to address the Thomas More situation.



If you would like to join me as a co-sponsor of LRB 4645, please contact my office at 267-5158 by <u>4 p.m. on Friday, March 3</u>.







WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE AUDIT BUREAU AUDIT SUMMARY

Report 00-2

February 2000

MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM

The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program was established in 1990 to provide publicly funded private school tuition for low-income children in Milwaukee. It is the largest such program in the United States. Enrollment increased significantly after the Wisconsin Supreme Court affirmed the constitutionality of religious schools' participation in 1998, and the United States Supreme Court allowed that decision to stand. In 1998-99, enrollment more than tripled compared to the previous school year, largely because of religious schools' participation. Approximately 8,000 pupils are enrolled in 91 private schools, which will receive an estimated \$38.9 million in publicly funded tuition payments for the 1999-2000 school year.

Participants Choose Schools Based on Perceived Quality

As intended, the Choice program appears to be serving children who meet statutory requirements related to low income and residence in the city of Milwaukee. In addition, the program serves pupils whose overall ethnic composition is similar to that of Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) pupils. In the 1998-99 school year, 62.4 percent of Choice pupils were African-American, and 61.4 percent of MPS pupils were African-American.

We surveyed participating families about how and why they chose schools. Families appear to have learned about the program and their children's schools through informal sources, such as friends or relatives. Parents reported selecting schools they believed would provide higher educational standards (71.1 percent of respondents), good teachers (70.4 percent of respondents), and safe and orderly environments (67.8 percent of respondents).

Participating Schools Offer a Variety of Educational Programs

Of the 86 participating private schools in 1998-99, 63 were religious and 23 were secular. Almost 70 percent of students attended the religious schools, which included Jewish, Christian, and Islamic schools. Geographically, participating schools are distributed throughout the city. Most enroll primarily pupils who live within three miles.

Participating schools offer a variety of educational programs, including alternative educational approaches, bilingual or multicultural emphases, programs for at-risk pupils, and college preparatory or vocational education. Seven schools reported offering special educational services in the 1998-99 school year. We found 171 Choice pupils had previously been identified by MPS as having special education needs. However, the total of special needs pupils in the program is not known because participating schools are not required to identify and report pupils in need of special services or their levels of need.

Academic Performance of Choice and MPS Pupils Cannot Be Directly Compared

Choice and MPS pupils' current academic performance cannot be compared because Choice schools are not required to administer standardized tests. While 68 Choice schools reported administering standardized tests in the 1998-99 school year, the types of tests varied. Past research on pupils' academic performance in the Choice program and other voucher programs has produced mixed results that indicate either no difference or a small but statistically significant improvement by voucher students over their public school counterparts.

Other indicators of quality include whether schools use accreditation and other methods of independent review. Of the 86 schools participating in 1998-99, 76 schools serving 93 percent of Choice pupils had obtained or were actively seeking independent accreditation or used standardized testing. However, nine schools serving 366 Choice pupils had no accreditation, were not seeking accreditation, and administered no standardized tests. All participating schools report they are complying with statutory performance standards relating to parental participation or to pupils' attendance or academic advancement.

Admissions Procedures Could Be Improved

Recent concerns about program operations have focused on participating schools' admissions practices. Statutes require schools to accept all eligible pupils or to select randomly among them in order to ensure that all eligible pupils, including those with poor academic records or special educational needs, have an opportunity to participate. The Department of Public Instruction is currently investigating a formal complaint filed in 1999, which alleges that 17 schools violated program requirements, including those that require random admissions, prohibit fees, and require schools to allow pupils to opt out of religious activities.

We have identified alternative procedures that could increase families' awareness of program requirements during the admissions process. Currently, neither the Department of Public Instruction nor families are informed of eligibility determinations, which are made by the schools, until admissions decisions have been made. If eligibility determinations were instead made before admissions decisions, the Department could inform eligible pupils' families of program requirements in a more timely manner, instead of relying upon the schools to provide this information to applicants.

full report, PDF file (530KB) This file requires Adobe Acrobat

Go to LAB Reports Page

SS. Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church

2515 SOUTH 30th STREET
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53215
FR. THOMAS MUELLER, RECTOR
(414) 671-5819

fax 414 - 671 - 5865 June 7, 2000

FAX TO SEN. GARY GEORGE 608-266-7381 RE: CHOICE (VOUCHER) SCHOOL HEARING

At last week's hearing in Milwaukee, I spoke about the need for accountability. Subsequently, I spoke with Katherine Hildebrand in the governor's office about this same subject. When she spoke about the need to avoid church/state "entanglement", I countered that, when church agencies get involved in a government program, they accept government regulations. If they don't want government involvement, they can stay out of the program no one wants to force state regulation on church schools until they get involved in government programs and funding. addition, church-run hospitals and nursing homes do accept the same state regulations as other such institutions because the welfare of those who utilize these institutions is a matter of legitimate concern for the state. The same should apply here. She answered that state regulations may make the choice program less attractive to schools and they may drop out. I say, "So what?" I don't care if they want to be in the program or not. My concern is with my tax money. The public has a right and a resposibility to see that its funds are used properly. Without accountability, how can we know this? If choice schools can't stand the heat of public oversight, they should get out of the kitchen, taking their hands off the public platter.

Another issue: even if religious choice schools cannot be subject to state regulation, this has nothing to do with the non-religious choice schhols. No issue of church/state pertains. Why should they not be subject, then, to state oversight, regardless of the situation with church-run schools?

A third question: what will happen when other private schools in other Wisconsin counties demand the same opportunities and funding that these schools have in Milwaukee? What if they file discrimination lawsuits demanding these opportunities? Are we ready to make this a state-wide program, as the Bradley Foundation openly suggests already? Are we ready for the effect this will have on school funding statewide? Are we ready to foreswear our responsibility of oversight now?

Very Lev Tromes Huelles

Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin Center Director, Dennis W Redovich Ed.D

A Review of the Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program

Center Report 2 February 2000

The February 2000 Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau is not an evaluation. It is a descriptive report on the history of the Milwaukee Choice Program and the current status of the program.

The report does not indicate that the Milwaukee Choice Program is a success or failure. The report does not give any significant recommendations or state any conclusions that would allow anyone to claim the program is a success or failure.

In fact, there is "absolutely' no evidence presented that would allow anyone to say whether the Choice program is a success or failure. This is because there is "absolutely" no accountability data available for any of the 86 choice schools in operation in 1998-99 or the 91 in 1999-2000. How can the State Wisconsin provide funding for Choice schools with no evaluation of the quality of these schools? Intolerable and disgraceful are words too mild to describe this situation.

There are no myths dispelled by this report. As shown in this report, the enrollment patterns in Choice schools are not comparable to MPS schools. In a February 7 Journal/Sentinel editorial, "State audit punctures choice myths", it is said that the audit shows that most schools are not certifiably basket cases. The audit certainly does not show this to be true. Outrageously, the audit indicates nothing about the quality of Choice schools and does not prove that some Choice schools are not basket cases. If one choice school is a basket case that is one too many. The same would be true of MPS schools. However MPS schools are required and do provide a "fully" compliant Accountability Report for the world to review. And they get bashed for their honest reporting.

The report was done by educational research amateurs. The report would not meet the research standards stated for "all" middle school students in the State of Wisconsin. However that does not stop Choice proponents and an academically disadvantaged media, including Education Week, from putting a phony positive spin on the report.

Advisory Board

Anne Arnesen WISKIDS, Dr. Rick Boettger Economist, Dr. Gerald Bracey Ed. Res., August Cibarich WI DWD Leon Todd Consultant, Att. Ed Garvey, Bob Haase Sen. Citizens, U.S. Rep. Jerry Kleczka, Prof. Howard Lee Stout, George Krieger MPS, Sen. Gwen Moore, Prof. Alex Molar UWM, Robert Miranda Ed. For the People, Sebastian Riccobono Business Owner, Ernie Schnook Retired Educator, John Weigelt MPS-ASC

A Review of the Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program

The February 2000 Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau is not an evaluation. It is a descriptive report on the history of the Milwaukee Choice Program and the current status of the program in terms of: (1) number of schools participating (2) number of secular and religious schools by location (3) enrollments by school, (4) less than 100 word descriptions of educational programs (About a fifth had no program information or had one line such as, St. Sebastian integrates Catholic Christian values into its curriculum), (5) 1998-99 operating budget totals (6) Cost/FTE pupil (7) Tuition for non-Choice pupils (8) Distance traveled to school by Choice pupils (9) Accreditation if any. There is a summary table that indicates the number of schools administering standardized tests of different types, but not by school.

The report is written very politely so as to not offend proponents or opponents of Choice schools and legislators. As a result, there are few recommendations or criticisms directed at either Choice schools or MPS schools. The only statement that might be considered a recommendation or concern is "Admissions procedures could be improved" In regard to admission procedures two concerns are raised. (1) Admission practices which are being investigated by DPI and (2) The Audit Bureau has identified alternative procedures that could increase families' awareness of program requirements during the admissions process. The LAB tried to be as fair as possible and not create controversy.

The most ridiculous premise of all so-called evaluations of Choice schools is that all Choice Schools are considered as one. Evaluations of academic achievement done prior to the addition of religious schools "never" analyzed test results by school. These prior studies have been appropriately found to be seriously flawed by many educational researchers. When bogus comparisons are made of academic achievement at Choice schools and MPS schools there is no differentiation by school. Obviously any rational person knows that there are great differences in academic achievement between individual MPS schools and between individual Choice schools. MPS annually publishes its test results by school, unlike Choice schools who are held to no testing or accountability requirements. The academic achievement of numerous MPS schools is excellent and the achievement of others varies greatly from good to poor.

Participants Choose Schools Based on Perceived Quality

The following statement in the so-called evaluation is a distortion of the enrollment data. "In addition, the program serves pupils whose overall composition is similar to that of the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) pupils. In the 1998-99 school year, 62.4 percent of choice pupils were African-American and 61.4 percent of MPS pupils were African-American. Again it is the ridiculous assumption that all Choice schools are similar and that it is not necessary to analyze data from individual schools. As shown in the following table enrollment by ethnic group varies from 0% to 100% in individual Choice schools.

The January 1999 enrollment by school of 86 Choice schools found on pages I-2 to I87 of the LAB report was used to compile the following table.

Enrollment of Religious and Secular Choice Schools by Location and Ethnic Group

Enrollment of Relig	zious	and 5	ecu	iar C	noice	e Scho	1012							
	Cath	olic	Luth	eran	Othe	rRel.	Jew	<i>i</i> sh	Sec	ular	Higl	h Schs	Total	
Location No. Schools	Nort	h (18)	Nort	h (10	North	า (9)	Nor	th (1)	Nor	th (19)	Nor	th (3)	North	(60)
African American	951	67%	387	62%	503	80%			142	1 82%	197	72%	3,453	73%
White	348	25%	110	18%	4	1%	67	100%	60	3%	28	10%	634	13%
Hispanic	101	7%	55	9%	5	1%			18	1%	39	14%	208	4%
Asian/NatAm/Other	20	1%	11	2%	0				8	0%	10	4%	49	1%
Unknown		0	49	8%	119	19%			233	13%	0		400	8%
Total	1,42	0	612		631		67		1,74	10	274		4,744	
	Cath	olic	Luth	eran	Islan	nic			Sec	ular	Hia	h Schs	Total	
Location No. Schools		h (18)	<u> </u>	th (1)						ıth (4)		ıth (2)	South	(26)
African American	37	4%	3	21%					23	15%	7	10%	70	5%
White	289	32%	11	79%					42	28%	10	14%	352	28%
Hispanic	447	50%							82	54%	55	76%	584	46%
Asian/NatAm/Other	69*	8%							4	3%	0		73	6%
Unknown	59	6%			121				0		0		180	14%
Total	901		14		121	100%			151		72		1,259	
	*57 /	Asian									<u> </u>			
All Locations	Cath	olic I (36)		eran al(11)		r Rel.		vish al (1)		ular al (23)		h Schs al (5)	Choic	
African-American	988	43%		62%		67%				44 83%				59%
							67	4000/						
White	637	27%		19%		1%	67	100%	102		38	10%		16%
Hispanic	548	24%	55	9%	5	1%			100	6%	94	27%	792	13%
Asian/AmInd/Other	89	4%	11	2%	0				12	1%	10	3%	122	2%
Unknown	59	3%	49	8%	240	31%			78	4%	0		580	10%
Total & % of Total	2321	39%	626	10%	752	12%	67	1%	189	1 32%	346	6%	6,003	i

Findings and Conclusions

- 1. A majority of Choice pupils (4,102, 68%) were enrolled in 63 Religious schools including 4 Catholic high schools in January 1999. A total of (1,901, 32%) Choice student were enrolled in 23 Secular schools including one high school. If religious schools were not part of the Choice program the Milwaukee Choice program would not be able to expand higher than about 2% of MPS enrollments.
- 2. A large majority of Choice pupils (4,744, 79%) were enrolled in 60 Choice schools located North of Wisconsin Avenue. There were (1,259 21%) in 26 Choice schools located South of Wisconsin Avenue.
- 3. A great majority of students (3,453, 73%) attending Choice schools on the North side were African Americans. However (400, 8%) of Choice pupils North were "unknown". Since 82% of students enrolled in Secular schools North were African Americans it could be estimated that at least 7% of unknown Choice pupils were African-Americans and therefore at least 80% of Choice North enrollment were African American.
- 4. Hispanic students were the largest group (584, 46%) attending 26 Choice South schools White enrollment was (352, 28%), Unknown (180 14%) and African-American enrollment was (70, 6%).

Obviously enrollment in Choice schools is not comparable to Milwaukee Public Schools. Nor is enrollment similar to MPS schools.

The survey of parents with a response of 159 of 606 (26%) is so flawed in response rate, sample selection and size and research design, the results are absolutely meaningless.

Again, there is no documentation of responses to each question by school the pupil attends or grade level. The 159 responses are an average of less than 2 responses per school (86). Most of the responses are probably from a small number of schools. The sample should have been large enough to have sub-samples by school and grade level that would provide statistically significant results. Multiple responses to reasons for choosing the private school such as, Provides higher educational standards should have been evaluated on some scale of importance or significance with sample sizes that would provide statistically significant results.

The perception created by the flawed survey results is that MPS schools do not have high enough standards. The fact is that "only" 50 of the 159 respondents' children attended an MPS school prior to enrolling in the private Choice school in 1998-99. Seventy-two (72) of the respondents indicated their children had "never" attended a public school.

In a February 7 Journal/Sentinel editorial, "State audit punctures choice myths", it is said that the audit shows that most schools are not certifiably basket cases. The audit certainly does not show this to be true. Outrageously, the audit indicates nothing about the quality

of Choice schools and does not prove that some Choice schools are not basket cases. If one choice school is a basket case that is one too many. The same would be true of MPS schools. However MPS schools are required and do provide a "fully" compliant Accountability Report for the world to review. And they get bashed for their honest reporting no matter what the results show. Why is MPS evaluated as a System rather than as a System with 209 individual schools?

Why does the audit not strongly recommend that Choice schools be held to the same accreditation and accountability standards as all public schools in Wisconsin?

Only 57 (67%) of 85 Choice schools in 1998-99 that responded to the survey question on accreditation were either accredited or were "seeking" accreditation. (One did not even respond to the question) Twenty-six (26, 46%) of the 57 schools were accredited by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Typically under religious schools descriptions of educational programs the integration of religious values into the curriculum was the first sentence. Example, "St. Sebastian School integrates Catholic Christian values into its curriculum." (No other curriculum description given)

How can the State of Wisconsin provide funding for Choice schools with no evaluation of the quality of these schools? Intolerable and disgraceful are words too mild to describe this situation. Are any of these Choice schools basket cases? Are the media and the Journal/Sentinel a haven for the academically disadvantaged?

Dennis W. Redovich Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin redovich@execpc.com 414-421-1120

Dennis W. Redovich retired as Director of Research, Planning and Development from the Milwaukee Area Technical College in 1991 after 28 years of service. He has taught chemistry and math at three Wisconsin high schools and chemistry at MATC, UW-Milwaukee and Marquette University. Presently Dr. Redovich is an educational consultant, public speaker and Center Director of the Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin.

Co-chairs Legislative Audit Committee Senator Gary George Rep. Carol Kelso

Dear Senator George and Rep. Kelso

Donald Bezruki of the LAB called me yesterday and indicated that you were carefully reviewing my February 29 letter and my Review of the Evaluation of the Parental choice Program. I am pleased that someone at least acknowledged they received the report. I had released the report on February 11 (posted on EducationNews.org on February 13) Since February 11 the phone call from Mr. Bezruki is the only response I have received. However the Shepherd Express has indicated that they will print a story next week.

The Choice schools should be continuously monitored for enrollment, student characteristics and educational programs. Choice schools should be required to provide all financial, demographic and academic program and achievement information requested by DPI or the LAB prior to receiving funding. If accountability is good and fair for public schools, why isn't it fair for the schools in the voucher program? I look forward to your response to this question and your views on my analysis of the LAB report.

There are a number of other education issues in Wisconsin that I believe require evaluation and perhaps a full fledged audit.

- * The MPS dropout and graduation rate. Course requirements for all such as algebra and math test for graduation are "destroying" MPS students. (See attached Analysis of MPS Accountability) Unbelievably MPS is the only School District with such requirements.
- * The 4th, 8th, and 10th statewide testing. Unlike the 3rd grade reading test these tests are not content validated and proficiency levels are useless. (See Morning Mail Journal)
- * Millions of dollars being wasted on educational technology and instructional materials without accountability. (See Just Another Big Con Technology) Posted Education News.
- * Millions wasted on university research and so-called Initiatives. (See Milwaukee Initiatives and Research also posted on EducationNews.org)

Best wishes,

Dennis W. Redovich Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin 6438 Sycamore St. Greendale WI 53129

This letter is being faxed and also e-mailed with attachments. Additional materials will be sent by U.S. Mail Copies to Donald Bezruki.

MPS Board of School Directors C/O Office of Board Governance Susan Lundin State Supt. of Public Instruction John Benson. Legislative Audit Bureau Journal/Sentinel Editors, Education reporters Joe Williams & Allan Borsuk Questions that are ignored by Wisconsin State Legislators, Milwaukee Public Schools, Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction, and the Journal/Sentinel.

What is the rationale for high stakes testing in mathematics and science for promotion and graduation in public elementary and secondary schools?

What is the rationale for "all" students meeting high standard requirements?

What is the rationale for requiring all 9th graders to pass algebra? What is the rationale for all 8th graders to master algebra prior to entering the 9th grade in the future? What is the rationale for all students to pass several years of mathematics courses beyond algebra to meet new graduation requirements in 2004? What is the rationale for all students to pass advanced science courses?

In a February 7 Journal/Sentinel editorial, "State audit punctures choice myths", it is said that the Legislative Audit Bureau audit shows that most schools Choice Schools are not certifiably basket cases. Outrageously, the audit indicates nothing about the quality of Choice schools and does not prove that some Choice schools are not basket cases. MPS schools are required and do provide a "fully" compliant Accountability Report for the world to review. And they get bashed for their honest reporting no matter what the results show. Why is MPS evaluated as a System rather than as a System with 209 individual schools?

Why does the audit not strongly recommend that Choice schools be held to the same accreditation and accountability standards as all public schools in Wisconsin?

A March 2000 Analysis of MPS Dropouts has been distributed to each MPS Board member and is attached to this e-mail. I have asked that this report be placed on the appropriate MPS Board Committee April agenda. Serious questions are being ignored by the MPS Board.

Why are 44% (1,265) of 1998-99 MPS dropouts 9th graders? Why are dropouts from Small Community Schools (Partnership/Alternative Schools) which represented 867 (30%) of MPS dropouts in 1998-99 not shown separately in MPS accountability reports?

An audit of seriously flawed DPI methodologies for dropout and graduation rates should be done. An analysis of MPS dropouts should be made. For example, How many MPS students are incarcerated or institutionalized every year? How many MPS dropouts just disappear and no one knows where they are? School bashers of all persuasions gleefully use MPS teachers and schools as scapegoats for problems that politicians and the media ignore. Why? hg

Dennis W. Redovich, Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin

Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin

A Response to the Manhattan Institute's Report "Choosing Integration" It is Unbelievable Nonsense! By Dennis W. Redovich

It is difficult to believe that anyone would admit to paying for and printing a report such as the twelve-page report, Choosing Integration by Jay P. Greene posted on EducationNews. The report suggests school district policy that is contradictory to the future Neighborhood School Plans of the Milwaukee Public Schools. Also, the report completely misrepresents school integration data for MPS and private school choice schools in Milwaukee.

In 12 pages of mostly nonsense rhetoric, Jay P. Greene comes up with two perceptible suggestions. 1. By detaching where students go to school from where they live, chosen schools tend to be better integrated. That has been the experience of MPS District schools. MPS parents can choose the school their children attend and a year 2000 survey by UW-Milwaukee has confirmed what two other MPS surveys have found earlier in the 1990's. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the school their children attend. There is little if any so-called forced busing in Milwaukee.

However the present MPS School Board is preparing a new Neighborhood School Plan which will restrict bussing and encourage students to enroll in a neighborhood school. According to Mr. Greene this should reduce integration.

On the other hand, Choice school students, choice voucher and non-voucher students who are White and Hispanic on the south side and African American on the North side tend to enroll in schools closer to their homes. Choice parents are also overwhelmingly pleased with the school their children attend.

Milwaukee is absolutely the only location in the United States with sufficient numbers of voucher students, about 6,000 September 1998 and 7,900 September 1999 to evaluate the effect of vouchers on integration. The analysis of 1998-99 Milwaukee Choice enrollments by Fuller and Mitchell cited by Greene is misleading and useless. The 86 1998-99 Choice school enrollments are not analyzed by location, religious or secular or by grade level. Sixty one of 98-99 Choice schools located on the North side of Milwaukee had an African-American enrollment of about 80% while 25 Choice schools located on the South side of Milwaukee had an African-American enrollment of about 6%. (See enrollment data on page 2) This is because 18 of 25 South side Choice schools were Catholic schools with an African-American enrollment of 4%.

If all 209 MPS schools are compared with all 86 Choice schools the enrollment of whites and minorities are comparable. However Fuller and Mitchell present enrollment data in percentage terms without numbers and analysis of the MPS District schools (165 regular and 54 Alternative/Partnership schools) enrollments by location. To say that Choice schools are better integrated than MPS schools for any reason is ridiculous.

For the 1999-2000 school year only enrollment by Choice School is available. A summary of enrollments follows. Source of data: Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction (DPI) May 2000.

September 1999 Enrollment of Milwaukee Choice Students Enrolled in 90 Schools

Religious Schools (58) 5,079, 64% of Total 7,918 Secular Schools (32) 2,839, 36%

Catholic Schools (40) 3,812, 48% Lutheran Schools (11) 742, 9% Other Religious (7) 525, 7%

Many factors are involved in a parent's selection of a school. Integration is probably a very minor reason for the choice of a MPS or private school. In fact, avoiding integration is probably a more important (but not publicly said) reason for many students attending private schools. In the mid 70's 65% of MPS students were white, in 1999 about 18% were white and in 2000 it is about 16 to 17%.

MPS Board President Bruce Thompson was absolutely wrong when he implied in a recent article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that Choice schools or private schools increase integration. The number of white students in private schools (17,490. MPS 1999 Census) is about equal to white students in MPS schools (about 17,000 +) The percentage of white students has decreased to about 17% in MPS schools because white students are moving out of the District and just as importantly white students eligible for Choice (and significant numbers of Hispanic students) and those not eligible for choice (majority white) are transferring to private schools. Incredibly what Mr. Thompson is saying is that he favors integration of private schools at the expense of decreasing integration in MPS schools. And I believe this is what Mr. Greene is saying.

Another important reason for choice of school (MPS or private) is safety and convenience. In September 1999 enrollment by grade level of Voucher students was the following. Source of data: Wisconsin DPI May 2000.

K4 and K5 - 1,829, 22.8% of Total 7,996 K-3 - 4,413, 55.2% K-8 - 7,388, 92.3% 9-12 - 608, 7.6%

It is very convenient and safe for mothers to have young children bussed to Kindergarten and elementary schools. Because Catholic schools can enroll voucher students there are many schools available for voucher students.

So that the reader can get Jay P. Green's views an excerpt from the Washington Post posted on EducationNews.org follows. The complete report is also posted on EducationNews.org.

A second Greene suggestion is regarding the measurement of the integration of individual schools and all School District schools. 2. When possible, integration in schools should be compared against the racial composition of the broad community in which they are located. For most schools the broad community is the metropolitan area, not school district or city limits because these political boundaries may themselves be a product of or encourage segregationist behavior. (Can anyone explain the rationale for this methodology and what effect it would have on the integration of schools?)

Unbelievably, Greene says that public school attendance zones and district boundaries not only produce racially segregated housing patterns, but they probably encourage segregation in housing. This statement is so ridiculous it is not worthy of comment. Again, irrational public school bashers are blaming public schools for not alleviating social and economic problems those public schools did not create. Does Greene imply that suburban schools should be required to accept inner city students and that suburban students would voluntarily attend inner city schools with above average standardized test scores?

In Milwaukee, which is the "only" area in the U.S. where relatively large numbers of voucher students exist, this is reality. Source of data: Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau Audit, February 2000.

- 1. A majority of Choice pupils (4,102, 68%) were enrolled in 63 Religious schools including 4 Catholic high schools in January 1999. Total of (1,901, 32%) Choice students were enrolled in 23 Secular schools including one high school. If religious schools were not part of the Choice program the Milwaukee Choice program would not be able to expand higher than about 2% of MPS enrollments.
- 2. A large majority of Choice pupils (4,744, 79%) were enrolled in 60 Choice schools located North of Wisconsin Avenue. There were (1,259 21%) in 26 Choice schools located South of Wisconsin Avenue.
- 3. A great majority of students (3,453, 73%) attending Choice schools on the North side were African Americans. However (400, 8%) of Choice pupils North were "unknown". Since 82% of students enrolled in Secular schools North were African Americans it could be estimated that at least 7% of unknown Choice pupils were African-Americans and therefore at least 80% of Choice North enrollment were African American.
- 4. Hispanic students were the largest group (584, 46%) attending 26 Choice South schools, White enrollment was (352, 28%), Unknown (180 14%) and African-American enrollment was (70, 6%).

Obviously enrollment in Choice schools is not comparable to Milwaukee Public Schools. Nor is enrollment similar to MPS schools. To say that vouchers increase integration is ridiculous.

Washington Post WHO'S MORE DIVERSE? Private schools rank well

Some educators complain that school-choice programs send tax dollars to charter or private schools that are not as racially integrated as regular public schools. But one researcher has concluded that private and charter schools often are the ones providing more ethnic balance.

Jay P. Greene, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, found that 60 percent of Cleveland's public school students in 1998 attended schools where one ethnic group accounted for more than 90 percent of the enrollment. But only 50 percent of the Cleveland students using vouchers to attend private schools attended schools that were so heavily segregated.

For comparable national figures, Greene had to rely on data from 1992. Nationwide, 54 percent of public school students were in Classrooms that were more than 90 percent one ethnic group, while only 41 percent of private school students were in such Ethnically imbalanced classes, he said.

Greene, who can be reached at jaygreene@earthlink.net, said private schools often are more integrated than public schools Because they do not determine their student composition based on racially segregated housing patterns' and because parents trust them to provide a peaceful, integrated atmosphere.

Dennis W. Redovich Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin redovich@execpc.com 414-421-1120

Dennis W. Redovich retired as Director of Research, Planning and Development from the Milwaukee Area Technical College in 1991 after 28 years of service. He has taught chemistry and math at three Wisconsin high schools and chemistry at MATC, UW-Milwaukee and Marquette University. Presently Dr. Redovich is an educational consultant, public speaker and Center Director of the Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin.

Dan Bice and Joe Williams, March 2000 Letter to Journal/Sentinel Letter was also sent to numerous State Legislators, DPI and MPS

I have reviewed the 1998 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the City of Milwaukee, the latest available. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has provided me with 1998-99 selected financial data for MPS and all School Districts in the State of Wisconsin. All data used in my attached analysis of MPS revenues and finances come from the above sources.

Unlike any other School district in the State of Wisconsin, substantially all treasury function activities of MPS are controlled by the City of Milwaukee. As indicated in MPS Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, "A major portion of the District's cash is held and controlled by the Treasurer of the City of Milwaukee. The City retains all investment income and absorbs all losses".

I would estimate that if all tax revenues, state aids and other MPS revenues controlled by the City of Milwaukee were controlled by MPS, at least \$8 million or more of interest income would be available to MPS. In addition a cash reserve of about 15% (\$150 million) would provide another \$7 to \$8 million in investment income. This does not include interest earned on cash balances for debt service bonds and notes which the City of Milwaukee now controls. It is not possible to determine the precise revenue of the City on investment income of MPS funds because the City budget documents do not identify how much of their investment income came from MPS funds. (General Revenues or Debt Service) However the City Comprehensive Budget does indicate that in 1998 \$53.282 million of revenues were from "other" sources. (Most of this revenue is from Investment income from various funds including MPS funds)

Another reason it is not possible to determine accurately investment income the City receives utilizing MPS funds is that information of cash flow to and from MPS accounts is not known. The timing of the receipt of Property Tax, State Aids, Federal Aids and other revenue would have to be compared to the timing of expenditures by MPS. However since the city controls the money, they are in a position to use the funds to their best advantage. I am told that even with a cash flow of more than \$1 Billion, MPS sometimes has to borrow money to pay its bills on time.

In any case, someone should perform an audit such as the Legislative Audit Bureau, to accurately determine how many millions the City is earning using MPS funds. State Statutes must be modified so that MPS has the same financial control over its revenues as every other School District in the State of Wisconsin.

I would be pleased to have the City of Milwaukee Treasurer review my analysis for accuracy. It is the best I can do without detailed data from the City on interest income on MPS funds.

Milwaukee Public Schools & City of Milwaukee Revenues

In 1998-99 MPS had General Fund revenues of about \$848 million (see attached table) almost all of which passed through the City Treasurer. In calendar year 1998 there was a cash flow of about \$1.1 Billion of assets (See attached) that were under the control of the City during the year. All tax collections, state aids and other revenues go to the City and are disbursed to MPS as needed. In calendar year 1998 the City had a balance of \$148,464,000 in January and a cash balance of \$131,470,000 and \$63,708,000 in MPS Debt Service bonds and notes in December 1998. (See attached) The City may earn interest on any cash flow or funds from bonds until MPS uses the funds. In calendar year 1998 the City must have earned millions in investment income using MPS funds. Perhaps as much as \$40 to \$50 million in interest on investments from all sources of revenue, including MPS assets.

As shown in the attached City of Milwaukee Revenues, the City had total revenues of \$594,110,000 in 1998 and \$53,496,000 in other revenue (largely interest income). In addition the City had about \$10 million in interest income on debt service notes and bonds. Interest earned on MPS's \$1 billion cash flow and \$63 million in bonds are not shown separately in the City's Comprehensive Financial Report.

As shown in the table below, in 9 larger State of Wisconsin School Districts (excluding Milwaukee) average 0.95% interest revenue on their General Fund cash in 1998-99. Elm Brook earned 1.4%, \$899,299 on a \$63790,247 fund. If MPS earned 1% on its General fund of more than \$800 million its income would be at least \$8 million, not including interest on reserves. In 1998-99 the Appleton area earned 6.0% interest, \$343,323 on \$5,410,275 of Debt Service. Eight large Wisconsin School Districts (Not including Milwaukee and Madison which earned \$0 on Debt Service) averaged 1.3% in investment return on their debt service. The amount of money earned varies greatly (0.38% to 6.0%) because of the timing of the issuing of the bonds and when the income is shown in the School Districts budget.

If Milwaukee issues \$170 million of bonds for MPS school construction, the city will earn millions in investment income while the bond money is spent over a number of years and MPS and the State of Wisconsin (about 66%) will pay the principal and interest. Mayor Norquist will be a big hero while he enjoys using the millions in investment income for anything he wishes.

The revenues of the City of Milwaukee are about \$600 million in 1998 and the revenues of MPS about \$850 million. It might be assumed that investment income the MPS General fund (Cash flow of about \$1 Billion) would be larger than investment inome from the city General Fund. However investment income from debt service would be higher for the City (Bonds & Notes \$369 million) MPS (\$63.7 million) Since separate City and MPS investment income is not shown in City budgets, this cannot be validated.

The issue of who gets to use arbitrage interest income is the Packer deal problem...

General Fund, Investment Income, Debt service & Interest Income in Wisconsin School Districts 1998-99 Source: Wisconsin DPI March 2000

School Distr	ict	Investment I	nc.	Debt Ser.		
	General Fund		% Retu	rn I	nt. Inc. %	Return
Milwaukee	\$848,105,522	1,394,287	0.16%	\$10,164,141	0	0%
Madison	225,126,370	1,728,661	0.77%	10,181,760	0	0
Racine	162,813,572	1,599,919	0.98 %	918,049	32,995,041	0.94.%
Green Bay	139,741,699	918,049	0.66%	12,755,813	48,383	0.38%
Kenosha	137,794,631	1,656,625	1.2%	7,724,273	193,494	2.49%
Waukesha	97,131789	956,785	0.98%	17,334,103	108,366	0.63%
Appleton Are	ea 100,941,491	885,436	0.88%	5,686,879	343,323	6.0%
West Allis	69,415,225	614,899	0.89%	2,689,583	32,577	1.2%
Elm Brook	63,790,247	899,299	1.4%	1,096,730	13,499	1.23%
Wauwatosa	56,572,753	783,382	1.38%	856,185	8,941	1.04%
Total	\$1,053,387,779 *	10,043,163	0.95%*	81,139,477*	* 1,058,643	1.3%**

^{*}Does not include Milwaukee** Does not include Milwaukee-Madison Highest earnings Investment Income Elm Brook 1.4% Debt Service Income Appleton Area 6.0%

Dennis W. Redovich Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin March 2000

MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM

Legislative Audit Bureau May 2000

Choice in 1999-2000

- ▶ 7,621 full-time equivalent pupils participating
- ◆ 91 private schools
- \$38.9 million in tuition payments; average of \$5,106 per pupil

Choice History

- Began in 1990-91, when 7 secular schools served 300 pupils
- Law amended in 1995 to include religious schools
- Legal challenges delayed religious schools' participation until 1998-99
- pupils In 1998-99, 23 secular schools served 1,830 pupils and 63 religious schools served 4,250

Pupil Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Low income: 175% of poverty level; \$29,225 for family of four in 1999-2000
- Resident of the City of Milwaukee
- Not previously enrolled as a non-Choice exceptions pupil in a Choice school, with some

Who Participates

	MPS	Choice
Kindergarten	14.2%	23.3%
Grades 1-5	41.1	52.1
Grades 6-8	20.6	18.1
High school	24.1	6.5

Who Participates

	MPS	Choice
African-American	61.4%	62.4%
White	20.2	18.8
Hispanic	13.3	13.2
Asian-American	4.1	2.4
Native American	1.0	0.7
Other/Unknown	!	2.5

Fiscal Effect

- ▶ Through 1999-00, \$92.6 million in state schools. aids were redirected from MPS to Choice
- Beginning in 2000-01, half of Choice of state. funding from MPS aids, half from balance
- Schools may offset state aid reduction with increased local levy.

Why Participants Left MPS

- ▶ 68.8% believed MPS didn't teach morals and values they want for their children
- ▶ 52.3% were concerned with safety at MPS
- ▶ 51.6% were dissatisfied with MPS class size

How Participants Selected Their Choice Schools

- ▶ 71.1%--higher educational standards
- ◆ 70.4%--good teachers
- ▶ 67.8%--safe and orderly school
- ▶ 65.1%--provides religious instruction
- ► 56.6%--smaller class sizes

Ensuring Equal Access

Choice schools may not:

- place conditions on admission, such as test scores;
- require certain fees;
- require participation in any religious activity.

Allegations of Non-compliance

- 24 allegations against 18 schools
- DPI found probable cause for 10 violations involving 7 schools
- DPI found no probable cause concerning 14 allegations involving 11 schools
- Resolution efforts are still in progress

Performance Standards

- → 70% of pupils advance 1 grade level (43 schools)
- 90% average attendance (33 schools)
- 80% of pupils demonstrate significant progress (2 schools)
- 70% of parents meet parental involvement criteria (6 schools)

Potential Indicators of Quality

68 schools administer standardized tests:

10 10 6	Other 26	WSAS 6	Wis. Reading 10	COGAT 14	IOWA DASIC 32
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Quality Other Potential Indicators of

- 76 schools were subject to accreditation, schools. used standardized tests, or were subject to licensure or MPS requirements for contract
- 9 schools serving 366 pupils met none of the indicators.
- 3 schools serving 282 children were judged unacceptable by private voucher program

MPS Board of School Directors C/O Office of Board Governance Susan Lundin State Supt. of Public Instruction John Benson. Legislative Audit Bureau Journal/Sentinel Editors, Education reporters Joe Williams & Allan Borsuk Questions that are ignored by Wisconsin State Legislators, Milwaukee Public Schools, Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction, and the Journal/Sentinel.

What is the rationale for high stakes testing in mathematics and science for promotion and graduation in public elementary and secondary schools?

What is the rationale for "all" students meeting high standard requirements?

What is the rationale for requiring all 9th graders to pass algebra? What is the rationale for all 8th graders to master algebra prior to entering the 9th grade in the future? What is the rationale for all students to pass several years of mathematics courses beyond algebra to meet new graduation requirements in 2004? What is the rationale for all students to pass advanced science courses?

In a February 7 Journal/Sentinel editorial, "State audit punctures choice myths", it is said that the Legislative Audit Bureau audit shows that most schools Choice Schools are not certifiably basket cases. Outrageously, the audit indicates nothing about the quality of Choice schools and does not prove that some Choice schools are not basket cases. MPS schools are required and do provide a "fully" compliant Accountability Report for the world to review. And they get bashed for their honest reporting no matter what the results show. Why is MPS evaluated as a System rather than as a System with 209 individual schools?

Why does the audit not strongly recommend that Choice schools be held to the same accreditation and accountability standards as all public schools in Wisconsin?

A March 2000 Analysis of MPS Dropouts has been distributed to each MPS Board member and is attached to this e-mail. I have asked that this report be placed on the appropriate MPS Board Committee April agenda. Serious questions are being ignored by the MPS Board.

Why are 44% (1,265) of 1998-99 MPS dropouts 9th graders? Why are dropouts from Small Community Schools (Partnership/Alternative Schools) which represented 867 (30%) of MPS dropouts in 1998-99 not shown separately in MPS accountability reports?

An audit of seriously flawed DPI methodologies for dropout and graduation rates should be done. An analysis of MPS dropouts should be made. For example, How many MPS students are incarcerated or institutionalized every year? How many MPS dropouts just disappear and no one knows where they are? School bashers of all persuasions gleefully use MPS teachers and schools as scapegoats for problems that politicians and the media ignore. Why? hg

Dennis W. Redovich, Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin

Co-chairs Legislative Audit Committee Senator Gary George Rep. Carol Kelso

Dear Senator George and Rep. Kelso

Donald Bezruki of the LAB called me yesterday and indicated that you were carefully reviewing my February 29 letter and my Review of the Evaluation of the Parental choice Program. I am pleased that someone at least acknowledged they received the report. I had released the report on February 11 (posted on EducationNews.org on February 13) Since February 11 the phone call from Mr. Bezruki is the only response I have received. However the Shepherd Express has indicated that they will print a story next week.

The Choice schools should be continuously monitored for enrollment, student characteristics and educational programs. Choice schools should be required to provide all financial, demographic and academic program and achievement information requested by DPI or the LAB prior to receiving funding. If accountability is good and fair for public schools, why isn't it fair for the schools in the voucher program? I look forward to your response to this question and your views on my analysis of the LAB report.

There are a number of other education issues in Wisconsin that I believe require evaluation and perhaps a full fledged audit.

- * The MPS dropout and graduation rate. Course requirements for all such as algebra and math test for graduation are "destroying" MPS students. (See attached Analysis of MPS Accountability) Unbelievably MPS is the only School District with such requirements.
- * The 4th, 8th, and 10th statewide testing. Unlike the 3rd grade reading test these tests are not content validated and proficiency levels are useless. (See Morning Mail Journal)
- * Millions of dollars being wasted on educational technology and instructional materials without accountability. (See Just Another Big Con Technology) Posted Education News.
- * Millions wasted on university research and so-called Initiatives. (See Milwaukee Initiatives and Research also posted on EducationNews.org)

Best wishes,

Dennis W. Redovich Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin 6438 Sycamore St. Greendale WI 53129

This letter is being faxed and also e-mailed with attachments. Additional materials will be sent by U.S. Mail Copies to Donald Bezruki.



May 30, 2000

TO:

Rep. Carol Kelso, Co-Chair, Legislative Audit Committee

Sen. Gary George, Co-Chair, Legislative Audit Committee

FROM:

Howard Fuller

RE:

Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program

I have attached a proposal submitted to you and others earlier this year. It recommends that the Legislature and Governor authorize an independent longitudinal study of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. Thank you for your consideration.

Ward Fuller, Ph.D.

Director, Institute for the Transformation of Learning

enclosure



January 7, 2000

TO: Governor Tommy Thompson

Superintendent of Public Instruction John Benson

Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen

Senate Majority Leader Charles Chvala

Representative Steven Nass, Assembly Education Reform Committee

Representative Luther Olsen, Assembly Education Committee Senator Richard Grobschmidt, Senate Education Committee Representative Carol Kelso, Legislative Audit Committee

Senator Gary George, Legislative Audit Committee

RE: Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP)

The Legislative Audit Bureau is scheduled to issue an evaluation of the MPCP early this year. The statutes do not provide for another state-sponsored evaluation of this program. The attached proposal describes a plan that the state might wish to consider in meeting the need for continuing study of this program.

With unified support from the state's elected officials, I am confident that private financial support could be encouraged to offset a portion of the proposal's cost.

I would be glad to respond to any questions you might have.

Sincerely, Howard Fulleyna

Howard Fuller

Distinguished Professor of Education

Director, Institute for the Transformation of Learning

Enclosure

Cc with enclosure:

Mary Hoy, Marquette University

William Harvey, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Charles Read, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Janice Mueller, Legislative Audit Bureau